

working. By making the tough choices necessary to turn record deficits into record surpluses, we are now in a position to start paying down the debt. According to the latest numbers from the Department of the Treasury, we will pay down \$152 billion in debt in the 3 months from April to June—the largest debt pay down in our Nation's history. By the end of this fiscal year, we will have repaid approximately \$300 billion in debt. If we continue on this path of fiscal discipline, we can pay off our national debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President. This will keep interest rates low and investment high and lead to savings on everything from mortgages to student loans for working families across America.

Statement on Action To Resolve the Impasse Over Armed Forces Training on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico

January 31, 2000

Today, I am announcing a course of action to resolve the impasse over United States Armed Forces training on Vieques. This course will give the people of Vieques the right to determine the future of the island while assuring that our training needs are met. I have received a letter from the Governor of Puerto Rico endorsing this course.

I am issuing two directives. They provide that between later this year and early 2002, there will be a referendum held on Vieques, in which the people of Vieques will be asked to choose between two alternatives. If they choose the first alternative, the Navy will cease all training on Vieques and leave the island by May 1, 2003. If they choose the second, training will continue on Vieques on terms that will be presented at least 3 months before the vote.

During the period leading up to the vote, training done on Vieques will be limited to nonexplosive ordnance—meaning there will be no live fire, and the Navy and Marine Corps will cut in half the amount of time they will spend training to no more than 90 days per year, which is what we need to meet our training needs. I will also implement measures to meet the health, safety, environ-

mental, and economic concerns of the people of Vieques, and I will ask Congress to begin transferring title to land on the western quarter of the island to Puerto Rico.

I believe this plan will help resolve the impasse over Vieques in the fairest possible way, because it will meet our training needs while giving the people most affected by this decision—the people who actually live on the island—the ability to choose for themselves the future of their island.

Memorandum on a Resolution Regarding Use of Range Facilities on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico

January 31, 2000

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense;
Director, Office of Management and Budget*

*Subject: Resolution Regarding Use of Range Facilities on Vieques, Puerto Rico
(Community Assistance)*

By separate directive I have addressed the resumption of Navy and Marine Corps training on the island of Vieques.

1. Provided that training opportunity has resumed and is continuously available on Vieques, then within 90 days of this directive, I direct the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to request authority and funding (which with funding for projects described in paragraph 5(e) of the previously referenced directive will total \$40 million) from the Congress for the following projects:

(a) To support the construction of a new commercial ferry pier and terminal by the Army Corps of Engineers.

(b) To establish an artificial reef construction and fish aggregation program to create substantial new commercial fishing areas for Vieques fishermen. Until such time as these new fishing grounds are operational, this legislation will authorize direct payments of an amount (to be determined by the National Marine Fisheries Services) to be paid to registered Vieques commercial fisherman for each day they are unable to use existing waters because the Navy is training.

(c) To support expanding or improving the major cross-island roadways and bridges on Vieques.

(d) To establish an apprenticeship/training program for young people of Vieques to facilitate participation in small-scale civic construction projects.

(e) To establish a program with the Government of Puerto Rico to preserve the Puerto Mosquito Vieques bioluminescent bay and to commit Federal resources to its preservation.

(f) To establish a professional economic development office for Vieques for the purpose of promoting Vieques and attracting jobs to the island.

2. The Director of OMB shall publish this directive in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:22 a.m., February 3, 2000]

NOTE: This memorandum was published in the *Federal Register* on February 4.

**Memorandum on a Resolution
Regarding Use of Range Facilities
on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico**

January 31, 2000

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense;
Director, Office of Management and Budget*

*Subject: Resolution Regarding Use of Range
Facilities on Vieques, Puerto Rico
(Referendum)*

By virtue of the authority vested in me and in order to further the interests of national security and to address the legitimate interests and concerns of the residents of Vieques and the people of Puerto Rico, I hereby direct the following:

1. The future of Navy training on Vieques will be determined by a referendum of the registered voters of Vieques, using Puerto Rico electoral laws and regulations as they exist as of the date of this directive. This referendum will occur on May 1, 2001, or 270 days prior to or following May 1, 2001, the exact date to be specified on the request of the Department of the Navy. (This specified date and the terms of the referendum must be requested at least 90 days in advance of the referendum.) It is understood that the full implementation of this directive is con-

tingent upon the Government of Puerto Rico authorizing and supporting this referendum, and the cooperation of the Government of Puerto Rico as specified in paragraph 5(a).

2. This referendum will present two alternatives. The first shall be that the Navy will cease all training not later than May 1, 2003. The second will permit continued training, to include live fire training, on terms proposed by the Navy. Live fire training is critical to enhance combat readiness for all our military personnel and must occur in some location.

3. In the event the referendum selects the option of termination of Navy activities, then

(a) Navy lands on the Eastern side of Vieques (including the Eastern Maneuver Area and the Live Impact Area) will be transferred within 1 year of the referendum to the General Services Administration (GSA) for disposal under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act, except for conservation zones, which will be transferred to the Department of the Interior for continued preservation.

(b) The GSA will supervise restoration of the lands described in section 3(a) consistent with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) before it is further transferred under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act, except that the Live Impact Area will be swept for ordnance and fenced to meet the same range standards used after the closure of the live impact area used by Naval Air Station, South Weymouth, Massachusetts. The Government of Puerto Rico may request transfer of the restored lands in accordance with the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act.

(c) Under no conditions will the land described in this section be returned to the Department of Defense or used for military training.

4. In the event the referendum selects the option of continued training submitted by the Navy, the Office of Management and Budget will request congressional funding to further provide for the enhancement of infrastructure and housing on the Western portions of Vieques in the amount of \$50 million.

5. Between the date of this directive and the referendum, the following will occur: